

Application Number 10/639,055
Amendment dated May 11, 2005
Response to Office action of February 22, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for reducing nanoscale roughness on a surface, comprising the step of exposing the surface to an environment for promoting evaporation of component molecules or atoms from one or more angular features of said surface, whereby said nanoscale roughness is reduced.

Claim 2 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step for promoting evaporation comprises heating said surface.

Claim 3 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step of exposing the surface to an environment for promoting evaporation comprises reducing a vapor pressure exerted by said molecules or atoms in said environment.

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 3 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises evacuating said environment.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 3 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises purging said environment with an inert gas.

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 3 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises the combination of an evacuating step and a purging step.

Claim 7 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said step for promoting evaporation comprises the combination of heating said surface and reducing a vapor pressure exerted by said molecules or atoms in said environment

Claim 8 (currently amended): The method of claim ~~[[3]]~~ wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises evacuating said environment.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method of claim ~~[[3]]~~ wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises purging said environment with an inert gas.

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Claim 10 (currently amended): The method of claim [[3]] wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises the combination of an evacuating step and a purging step.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A method for reducing nanoscale roughness on a pair of surfaces, comprising the step of exposing the surfaces to an environment for promoting evaporation of component molecules or atoms from one or more angular features of said surfaces, whereby said nanoscale roughness is reduced.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The method of claim 11 wherein said step of exposing the surfaces to an environment for promoting evaporation comprises heating said surfaces.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 11 wherein said step of exposing the surfaces to an environment for promoting evaporation comprises reducing a vapor pressure exerted by said molecules or atoms in said environment.

Claim 14 (original): The method of claim 13 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises evacuating said environment.

Claim 15 (original): The method of claim 13 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises purging said environment with an inert gas.

Claim 16 (original): The method of claim 13 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises the combination of an evacuating step and a purging step.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The method of claim 11 wherein said step of exposing the surfaces to an environment for promoting evaporation comprises the combination of heating said surfaces and reducing a vapor pressure exerted by said molecules or atoms in said environment

Claim 18 (original): The method of claim 17 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises evacuating said environment.

Claim 19 (original): The method of claim 17 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises purging said environment with an inert gas.

Claim 20 (original): The method of claim 17 wherein said step of reducing a vapor pressure comprises the combination of an evacuating step and a purging step.

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Claim 21 (currently amended): The method of claim 11 wherein said step of exposing the surfaces to an environment for promoting evaporation comprises applying a voltage bias ~~potential difference~~ between said surfaces.

Claim 22 (currently amended): The method of claim 11 wherein said step of exposing the surfaces to an environment for promoting evaporation comprises applying a temperature differential between said surfaces ~~operating said pair of surfaces as electrodes in a diode device.~~